

OCTOBER 2020

# GCU

MAGAZINE

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George N. Juba  
President  
CEO

# Blessings in a Troubled Year

**I**n Western Pennsylvania, this summer has been one of the most perfect summers I can remember. At times it was very hot and humid, but for me, I enjoy this type of weather. Under the current pandemic and social distancing restrictions put in place, the weather we experienced was “just what the doctor ordered!”

Many businesses have flourished under this environment such as the sales of recreational vehicles and bicycles. The golf industry is also experiencing a spike in the sale of equipment, increased rounds played in addition to more interest by families and individuals seeking private club memberships. Membership at Seven Oaks Country Club, a private club owned by the GCU Holding Company, has experienced a 63% increase in membership thus far over 2019. If anything positive can be linked to this pandemic it is that we are getting out of the house to enjoy more of the outdoors and what nature has to offer. Over the next several weeks the summer landscape will transform itself into one of the most spectacular phenomena of nature—presenting a most colorful picturesque portrait as nature prepares for its winter slumber. I do hope you have an opportunity to enjoy “God’s Country” during this fall season!

Despite the current COVID-19 pandemic environment, it has been “business as usual” for the GCU. As the safety of our employees is first and foremost, many of our employees are continuing to work remotely as requested by the Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, Tom Wolf. We express our gratitude to our entire Staff in continuing to provide exceptional service to our members and agents.

The pandemic has certainly negatively affected all businesses. GCU is very fortunate to tout a strong distribution force that promotes our life and annuity business and believes in our mission as a fraternal benefit society. We thank each of our agents for introducing GCU and our product lines to your clients.

Our annuity sales are 85% of goal (cash with application) with our overall total annuity premium received in 2020 at 89% of goal. In comparing total annuity premium year to date through September, we are behind 2019’s total premium by \$1.5 million or .0085% (Less than 1%).

Our life sales are 48% of goal (first year commissionable

premium) with our overall total life premium received in 2020 at 47% of goal. In comparing total life premium year to date through September, we are ahead of 2019’s total premium by \$1.4 million. The primary reason for falling short of our first-year commissionable premium goal, in addition to the pandemic challenges, is due to the delay in fully launching our newly developed final expense product. We are currently testing live with eight agents and working out all the “kinks” to achieve a flawless process for instantaneous decisions on applications submitted. The full launch of this product is scheduled for October 12<sup>th</sup>. Once launched, we will experience increased premium in the fourth quarter and into the future.

The GCU continues to experience growth in assets and surplus while continuing to experience excellent net profit before refunds and realized gains and losses. As previously reported the energy sector continues to be challenged as realized losses were recorded in our second quarter financial statement. The GCU’s second quarter financial statements are presented on page 4. Our Chief Financial Officer Tim Demetres, presents a detailed commentary on our 2020 second quarter results including the issues we are experiencing with investments within the energy sector.

We reside in the greatest country in the world. We enjoy the freedoms to live life as we please and take advantage of the various opportunities that allow us to strive to make our dreams a reality in creating the best possible lives for each of us and our families. These freedoms were the dreams of our ancestors who first arrived on the shores of America when they fled their homelands in search of independence and a better way of life. The Founding Fathers laid the foundation of our government through the Constitution of the United States and the Bill of Rights that established our country as a republic in which the supreme power is held by the people represented through elected officials. It is essential for each American to vet each and every candidate that serves our interests whether on a federal, state or local level. It is our civic duty to vote as this is one of the most important rights we have

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under our form of government. It is especially important to vote during a Presidential election year. The President is our leader that sets the tone within our government and establishes a plan and vision in working with our Congressional elected officials to address the needs of all Americans and the many issues currently facing our nation. So, no matter what your party affiliation may be, it is important to analyze each of the two candidates running for President this election year, scrutinizing their character and ability to lead our great nation over the next four years. Please exercise your right to vote!

The year 2020 was also an election year for the GCU's Spiritual Advisor and Board of Directors. As was previously reported, for the first time in the history of the GCU all adult benefit members had the privilege to vote for candidates that will lead our Society over the next four years. We thank all of the members that exercised their right to vote under the amended Bylaws of the GCU. We once again congratulate each of the ten incumbent Directors on their re-election. The newly elected Board of Directors is presented to you below. We welcome to the Board Rt. Reverend John Kachuba as our newly elected Spiritual Advisor. Father John is no stranger to the governance process of the GCU as he served as Chairman of the Supreme Tribunal and as Chairman of the Credential Committee for many of the GCU's Conventions. Again, welcome Father John!

Our fraternal programming for 2020 has had limited activity. We thank each of our lodges and districts that have been able to conduct events within the social distancing guidelines of the Center for Disease Control (CDC) and state and local mandates. We invite you to participate in the GCU's GoGIVE! Direct and Special COVID-19 Go-

Give! programs that can be done from the comfort of your home. Both programs were designed as Matching Fund Programs to enhance monetary charitable contributions made by individual GCU members. More information on these two programs are available on the GCU website—[www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com).

As our western states are experiencing devastating forest fires and our southern gulf and Atlantic seaboard states are dealing with severe damage created by hurricanes, we have once again activated a special matching funds program to financially support the efforts of Catholic Charities, the American Red Cross and the Salvation Army to supply various life sustaining needs to individuals and families affected by these natural disasters. Total donations as of October 4, with a few days left to go in the drive, were over \$3,600.<sup>00</sup> collected by the GCU Foundation in support of this effort. This total will be matched by the GCU resulting in a total of over \$7,200.<sup>00</sup> equally split amongst the three organizations. We thank all that have contributed to this cause.

In closing, my continued well wishes to you and to your loved ones that you continue to remain safe during this pandemic. Please take some time to enjoy the fall season that God has created for us. Also, do your part in combating this virus by abiding by the guidelines established that will assist in limiting its spread. We must continue to pray and call upon our Lord & Savior Jesus Christ and St. Nicholas, the patron saint of the GCU, to continue to inspire and provide the wisdom to the many individuals striving to develop a vaccine to combat this deadly disease.

GOODNESS IS GREAT!



## Newly Elected Board of Directors



**Mitred Archbishop**  
**John S. Kachuba**  
National Spiritual  
Advisor



**Gregory N. Vladika**  
Chairman of the Board



**George Kofel**  
Vice Chairman &  
Secretary of the Board



**Melanie Basl**  
National Director



**Dorothy Ann Foran**  
National Director



**Lisa Gulibon**  
National Director



**Michael W. Karaffa**  
National Director



**Barbara Kushner**  
National Director



**David A. Oleksa**  
National Director



**John W. Oslick**  
National Director



**Atty. John J. Urban**  
National Director

# SHERRI HOMANKO

## GCU 2020 Fraternalist of the Year



**The GCU Fraternalist of the Year** award recognizes an individual member who is the embodiment of fraternalism. Someone who lives a life of service through their local lodge, church, and community.

After consideration of the candidates submitted to the committee, Dr. Sherri Ann Homanko, a clinical pharmacist at a critical illness recovery hospital and Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge (GHRL) member, was chosen the 2020 GCU Fraternalist of the Year. Sherri not only works full time at her occupation, she also cares for church parishioners that are part of her GCU lodge. She spends time after her shift or during her breaks to pay a visit and give these special patients some familiar company. Sherri was the main care giver for her father following an extensive surgery in November 2019. She still finds time to volunteer countless hours in her community—touching the lives of many.

Sherri serves as secretary of the West Hazleton Lions Club. With the Lions she participates in many activities benefiting her community including the West Hazleton Christmas Tree lighting welcoming Santa Claus and answering telephones for the American Cancer Society Telethon. As a Board member with Greater Hazleton CAN DO, Inc. representing the West Hazleton Lions Club, Sherri serves on the Community Relations Committee, serves as the Industrial Park's Curb Appeal Event co-Chair and has served on the annual dinner committee. She volunteers with the student

action subcommittee, mentoring and participating with CAN DO's Community Christmas where youth from various schools in the region perform for the community. Most recently, she has been spreading information for grants and COVID-19 relief financial options throughout businesses in the area for assistance in these troubling times.

Sherri is the Executive Director of the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization (MGHSO) where she mentors young women ages 12-25. The program provides the benefits of community service, resume preparation, communication growth, interview skill improvement, public speaking, confidence building, talent development, networking, goal setting, fundraising skills, lifelong friendships, professional development and scholarship opportunities. MGHSO holds three annual fundraising events—Halloween Harvest Party, Christmas Character Breakfast and the Easter Bunny Brunch & Egg Hunt. At all events, a canned food drive is held to support food banks. Funds are used to support scholarships and community service initiatives.

Sherri volunteers for Hazleton's FUN-

Fest and helped organize the launch of HOMETOWN HEROES in 2019 with Mike Sosar. She also arranges for teens to dress as familiar princesses to spread happiness for children.

As a volunteer at the Hazleton UNICO's Bell Italia Festival she organizes the Kiddie Korner, featuring free games and face painting for children. She has titleholders from the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization and cheerleaders in the Hazleton Area School District volunteer.

At Butler Township's Fall Festival, Sherri assists in organizing participation in their parade and face painting. In addition, Sherri arranges for Butler Township to have MGHSO Titleholders present at their Annual Christmas Tree Lighting ceremony.

At Hazle Township's Christmas in the Park, Sherri organizes the S'more stand for attendees to have a tasty snack while they warm up by the fire pits.

The 2019 Christmas in Conyngham was not going to be held for the first time in four years. Sherri and her friends arranged a committee and

CONTINUED on PAGE 9



Presentation of award to Sherri Homanko. From left: Mike Homanko, GCU National Director Dorothy Ann Foran, 2020 Fraternalist of the Year-Sherri Homanko, 2019 Fraternalist of the Year-Agnes Rohrbach and Mary Homanko.

# Second Quarter 2020 Financials



**Tim Demetres**  
Chief Financial Officer

**G**CU is committed to serving our members during these uncertain times brought on by the Coronavirus (COVID-19). We are firmly positioned to withstand the impact of the pandemic because of our dedicated employees and our financial strength. The economy is improving with unemployment levels dropping, mortgage rates are low for home buyers, and equity & bond valuations are increasing to pre COVID-19 levels. While certain industries continue to struggle, we are prudently managing our investments and will impair those securities unlikely to recover in value, particularly energy sector holdings. By doing so, we put these exposures behind us.

Highlights of the 2020 half-year results are as follows:

Income before net capital gains (losses) totaled \$13.8 million slightly under the \$14 million reported in 2019. Net realized capital losses were \$10.7 million in 2020 compared to \$3.7 million in 2019. We impaired three energy bonds that filed for bankruptcy protection due to low demand and low energy prices, a situation that was exacerbated by COVID-19. As a result, net income after net realized losses was \$3.1 million in 2020 compared to \$10.2 million in 2019. Notwithstanding the impact realized losses had on net income, surplus was largely protected by a release of the asset valuation reserve (AVR). The AVR is a liability built-up over time and used to soften the negative impact to surplus from deteriorating credit losses. Our goal is to insure GCU maintains its financial strength to meet member obligations well into the future!

Total Assets increased \$72.8 million to \$2.125 billion at June 30<sup>th</sup> from year-end 2019. The increase in assets reflects continued growth in invested assets from excess operating cash flows. We are strategically focused on asset allocation and generating risk adjusted returns to support our life and annuity products. A key component of this strategy is to complement our fixed income holdings by increasing exposure to public equities and alternative assets (investments in LLC's and limited partnerships).

Liabilities grew commensurate with life and annuity sales and totaled \$1.955 billion at June 30 compared to \$1.890 billion at year-end 2019. The \$65.5 million increase in total liabilities is due primarily to a \$72.5 million increase in life and annuity reserves off-set by a \$7.9 million decrease in AVR.

Total Income for the first half 2020 was \$181.5 million compared to \$181.6 million in 2019. Life sales have increased 33% over prior year and continued growth is expected in the second half from the introduction of GCU's final expense life insurance product.

Operating expenses, before increase in reserves, totaled \$99.4 million versus \$84.3 million in 2019 representing an increase of \$15.1 million or 17.9%. In support of our members during the pandemic, GCU paid \$11.3 million more in annuity benefits (death claims, full and partial withdrawals), as well as exchanged certain annuity contracts to new contracts totaling \$4.3 million. General insurance expenses were flat compared to 2019.

The increase in reserves totaled \$68.2 million compared to \$83.3 million in 2019. Reserve changes are primarily a function of premiums received, death and annuity benefits paid out, and interest accumulation.

Surplus grew to \$170.1 million at June 30<sup>th</sup> compared to \$162.7 million at year-end. The \$7.3 million increase in surplus is attributable to the additions of net income and

## Summary of Financial Statistics

(000's omitted)	6/30/2020	6/30/2019	Change
Total Income	\$181,471	\$181,633	\$(162)
Total Expenses	167,521	167,523	(2)
Net Income (Loss)	3,087	10,231	(7,144)
	6/30/2020	12/31/2019	Change
Assets	\$2,125,169	\$2,052,335	\$72,834
Asset Valuation Reserve	10,816	18,747	(7,931)
Interest Maintenance Reserve	21,858	21,539	319
Surplus (Net Worth)	170,061	162,742	7,319
Total Adjusted Capital (TAC)	181,026	181,639	(613)
Solv. Ratio by Total Adj. Capital	109.3%	109.7%	(0.4%)

## Change in Surplus

(000's omitted)	
Beginning Surplus	\$162,742
Net Income/(loss)	3,087
Change in Unrealized Gain/(Loss)	(1,704)
GCU Holding Company & Other	(727)
Changes in Non-Admitted Assets	(1,268)
Changes in Asset Valuation Reserve	7,931
Net Change in Surplus	7,319
<b>Ending Surplus</b>	<b>\$170,061</b>

the change in AVR of \$3.1 million and \$7.9 million, respectively, off-set by decreases in unrealized gains/losses (\$1.7 million); a (\$1.3 million) charge for an increase in non-admitted assets software development costs and a (\$0.7 million) reduction for GCU Holding Company's net loss .

Total Adjusted Capital (TAC) at June 30, 2020 is \$181.0 million. TAC starts with surplus of \$170.1 million and adds back the asset valuation reserve of \$10.8 million and one-

half the dividend liability of \$150,000. TAC is used as a financial strength measure by rating agencies. The solvency ratios based on TAC at June 30, 2020 and 2019 are 109.3% and 109.7%, respectively. These ratios reflect the continued financial strength of GCU.

Please be safe and stay healthy. Enjoy the autumn colors!

Tim

## GCU INCOME STATEMENT

Six Months 2020 vs. 2019

INCOME (000's omitted)	6/30/2020	6/30/2019	Change
Life Premium	\$ 2,416	\$ 1,810	\$ 606
Annuity Premium	112,508	118,484	(5,976)
Annuity Exchanges	12,837	8,515	4,322
Accident & Health	319	363	(44)
Sub Total	128,080	129,172	(1,092)
Net Investment Income	50,991	49,366	1,625
Amort. of Int. Maint. Resrv.	1,129	1,419	(290)
Commission-Reinsurance	980	1,311	(331)
Other	291	365	(74)
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$181,471</b>	<b>\$181,633</b>	<b>\$ (162)</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>			
Death Benefits	\$ 1,549	\$ 1,151	\$ 398
Annuity Benefits Paid	75,383	64,129	11,254
Annuity Exchanges	12,837	8,515	4,322
Surrender Benefits	216	467	(251)
Accident & Health Benefits Pd.	201	339	(138)
Commissions	4,721	5,309	(588)
General Insurance Exp	4,030	3,996	34
Ins., Taxes, Licenses & Fees	268	265	3
Pension Expense	43	52	(9)
Int. on Contract & Dep. Accts.	110	37	73
Sub-Total	\$ 99,358	\$ 84,260	\$15,098
Increase in Reserves	68,163	83,263	(15,100)
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$167,521</b>	<b>\$167,523</b>	<b>\$ (2)</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss Before Refunds</b>	<b>13,950</b>	<b>14,110</b>	<b>(160)</b>
<b>Refunds to Members</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Net Gain/Loss After Refunds</b>	<b>13,804</b>	<b>13,970</b>	<b>(166)</b>
<b>Net Capital Gains (Losses)</b>	<b>(10,717)</b>	<b>(3,739)</b>	<b>(6,978)</b>
<b>Net Income/Loss</b>	<b>\$ 3,087</b>	<b>\$ 10,231</b>	<b>\$ (7,144)</b>

## BALANCE SHEETS

June 30, 2020 vs. December 31, 2019

ASSETS (000's omitted)	6/30/2020	12/31/2019	Change
Bonds	\$1,975,748	\$1,922,664	\$53,084
Preferred Stocks	40,568	40,625	(57)
Common Stocks	24,712	16,093	8,619
Alternative Investments	27,166	20,776	6,390
Cash/Short Term Investments	25,252	17,624	7,628
Mortgages	4,311	4,129	182
Certificate Loans	580	573	7
Real Estate - home office	475	480	(5)
Inv. Income Due & Accrued	25,716	25,359	357
Other	640	4,011	(3,371)
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$2,125,169</b>	<b>\$2,052,334</b>	<b>\$72,835</b>
<b>Percentage Total Change Year to Year</b>			<b>3.5%</b>
<b>LIABILITIES</b>			
Life Reserves	\$ 73,171	\$ 71,515	\$ 1,656
Annuity Reserves	1,837,779	1,766,905	70,874
Accident & Health Reserves	166	191	(24)
Employee Pension Liability	7,059	6,839	220
Symposium Reserve	262	279	(17)
Adv. Prem. & Fut. Rfnd. Resrvs.	358	373	(15)
Accounts Payable	1,481	996	485
Refund Accumulations	2,158	2,209	(51)
Asset Valuation Resrv.-AVR	10,816	18,747	(7,931)
Interest Maint. Reserve-IMR	21,858	21,539	319
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>\$1,955,108</b>	<b>\$1,889,592</b>	<b>\$65,516</b>
Surplus Fund	170,061	162,742	7,319
<b>Total Liabilities &amp; Surplus</b>	<b>\$2,125,169</b>	<b>\$2,052,334</b>	<b>\$72,835</b>
<b>Solvency Ratio*</b>	<b>109.3%</b>	<b>109.7%</b>	

\*Adds AVR + 1/2 of dividend liability to surplus.

Financial information is unaudited and presented on the statutory basis of accounting.

Totals may vary slightly due to rounding.

# New Beginnings



Mitred Archpriest  
John S. Kachuba  
GCU Spiritual Advisor

**N**ew Beginnings can be exciting, scary, doubtful, frustrating, and visionary. To begin something new for an individual or an organization can be all of the above.

In 1892 clergy and laity from the Subcarpathian region of Europe met in Wilkes-Barre, PA to form a fraternal union, to be known as the Greek Catholic Union. This group of people wanted to ensure that its members were cared for financially, to provide the means for a good education, to aid their churches, and to promote friendship among its members. St. Nicholas of Myra was chosen as their patron and protector. In the coming years, when difficulties arose, St. Nicholas was there to protect. This new beginning was exciting, scary, and visionary – **A NEW BEGINNING.**

In 1936 eight hundred delegates of the Greek Catholic Union met in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, the place where it had been founded, at a most critical time in the life of the GCU. The Organization was experiencing a loss of members, difficulties in the Church, internal and financial problems. It was decided that the members not discuss the internal problems of the Church, and that the religious character of the organization remain the same. The decisions made at this convention and in the following years not only brought new life to the Organization but also new ideas. It could be said, I propose, St. Nicholas was there guiding the GCU after its first 50 years – **A NEW BEGINNING.**

In 1972 another significant moment in the life of the GCU took place. Numerous bylaws were changed, and the delegates unanimously endorsed a plan for the reorganization of the GCU. It was decided to consolidate all operations. The three branches of the GCU; the General Branch, the Gymnastic Branch, and the Juvenile Branch were merged into one—the main objectives of the GCU

would remain: religion, fraternalism, education and sports. The new governing board, now known as the Board of Directors, along with the Executive Officers took over the responsibility of serving its members. And, of course, St. Nicholas was watching over them – **A NEW BEGINNING.**

Other significant new beginnings occurred in 1978 when Seven Oaks Country Club was dedicated by Archbishop Stephen Kocisko; in 1987 when the GCU moved to its new Home Office in Beaver, PA; in 1988 when a resolution passed to build St. Nicholas Chapel, which was dedicated in 1992 by Archbishop Thomas Dolinay and in 1995 when Archbishop Metropolitan Judson Procyk proclaimed the St. Nicholas Chapel as an official church and public oratory. I am sure St. Nicholas blessed all who were involved in this magnificent chapel dedicated to him. The New Millennium saw the United Societies merge with the GCU in 2000 – **NEW BEGINNINGS.**

In the 128 years of existence of the GCU many more significant events have occurred. My intention was not to present a history of the GCU, but to point out that all these events were new beginnings that entailed times of excitement, fear, doubt, frustration and a continuing vision for this great organization.

My journey with the GCU began in 1984 when I attended my first convention in Philadelphia. General Counsel Sigmund Brinsky appointed me to serve on the legal committee. In 2004 I was honored to serve as the Chair of the Credentials Committee for the 39<sup>th</sup> National Convention, and for the next three Conventions. In 2016 I was honored to be elected by the members present at the Convention as the Chair of the Supreme Tribunal.

In October 2020, my service to God's people takes on another new dimension. This service began in 1974 as God gave me the gift of the Holy Priesthood. Through those years, I have served the People of God with the gifts bestowed on me by Him. I take on this responsibility as the Spiritual Director of the GCU with great appreciation. I believe that St. Nicholas, the patron of the GCU and the patron of our Byzantine Catholic Church, had a role to play in this. I want to thank all of you GCU members for your confidence in me by electing me to this position. I also want to thank Fr. Richard Lambert for his encouragement and his many years of serving as the Spiritual Director before me. When we began our seminary career together in 1966, we could have never imagined it would take us to where we are today. I spoke about new beginnings throughout this article and as I enter this new beginning in my life, I ask for your prayers that I may serve you to the best of my ability – **A NEW BEGINNING!**



The swearing in of GCU Spiritual Advisor Fr. John Kachuba (left) on October 5, 2020 by Fr. Richard Lambert. Photo by Dr. Tom Sopkovich



Atty. John J. Urban

# Lessons in the Law

## It's Not About Who You Know

**J**ust as you wouldn't ask a urologist to perform open heart surgery, a criminal attorney shouldn't be the one that handles your will, trust, or powers of attorney. The seemingly simple step of executing a healthcare power of attorney can pose serious complications for the person who doesn't know the ins and out of Ohio law.

I recall the story of a client who was prepping for surgery and decided to get his affairs in order in advance. His wife told a criminal lawyer friend in New Jersey about what she and her husband were planning to do, and he offered to save her a little money by doing the work himself. Prior to his surgery, the man became unexpectedly ill and it was then that the family discovered that the criminal lawyer friend had used the wrong power of attorney forms. Essentially the forms he used negated everything the family wanted and they weren't valid in Ohio. It was a mess and they had to wait until the man was well enough

**Review with your loved ones which documents you have, which ones you might need, where they are located, and how they can be accessed.**

to update the documents. Fortunately, the man recovered, but that's not always the case.

Holidays are a good time to review your estate planning situation with the family. Since everyone is likely to be gathered together, review with your loved ones which documents you have, which ones you might need, where they are located, and how they can be accessed.

## GCU Home Office Hours of Operation

The GCU Home Office (800.722.4428) is open Monday through Friday 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

The Call Center (855.306.0607) accepts calls Monday through Thursday from 8:30 AM to 7 PM EST and Fridays 8:30 AM to 5 PM EST.

**The Home Office will be closed Thursday & Friday, November 26<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup> for Thanksgiving. The Office will reopen Monday, November 30<sup>th</sup>.**

5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009





September 2020

GLORY TO JESUS CHRIST!

Dear Friends,

Every year, for several weeks before our annual Pilgrimage in honor of Our Lady of Perpetual Help, we petition Our Lord to grant us good weather for the weekend. Sometimes He responds favorably, and sometimes we face the challenge of rain and storms. This year, the year of our first virtual Pilgrimage, the weather was absolutely perfect. Doesn't Our Lord have quite the sense of humor!!!

Although we were disappointed that we were unable to welcome you in person (every year brings so many happy reunions!!), we were encouraged and touched by the number of pilgrims who joined us in prayer via our YouTube videos. We had about 5000 people who had watched one or more presentations. Likewise, we are in the process of lighting over 500 candles to fulfill the prayerful requests that were made. I believe that our dear Mother of Perpetual Help must have been very pleased by the honor given to her and her divine Son.

We extend our thanks to Archbishop William, to each of our Bishops and clergy, and to each Eparchy for the publicity given through their publications. Likewise, the Greek Catholic Union continues to support us as they have since our first days and our collaboration in caring for orphans at St. Nicholas Orphanage in Elmhurst, PA. We are also grateful to Sister Marion Dobos, OSB of the Archieparchial Office of Religious Education for the Children and Teen programs.

Finally, we thank each and every one of you for your words of loving support, your continued prayers, and your ongoing financial donations. It touches our hearts to experience such a caring response. Please know that we, in turn, will always remember you in our prayers each day. We bring your intentions to our dear Mother of Perpetual Help and are confident that she will watch over you and keep you under her loving protection as we continue to face the challenges of these days.

With love, prayers, and gratitude,

Sister Ruth Plante, OSBM, Provincial  
and the Sisters of St. Basil

## Volunteer Donations

In an effort to capture information on how GCU members volunteer their time within their communities, an online program was started this year asking members to record their volunteer time each month. As a thank you to those members that submit their volunteer hours, a drawing for Amazon gift cards is held monthly. In addition each quarter, all the members that have submitted volunteering information are placed in a drawing for two \$100.00 donations that are made to an organization where they volunteer in their name by GCU. The second quarter drawing winners were: Eva Anderson-Erb of Wisconsin and Sherri Homanko of Pennsylvania.

In a thank you note received from Tamera Schutz, director of the Pioneer Village Museum, she writes, "thank you GCU for the wonderful donation your organization

made to the Pioneer Village Museum. As you can imagine, it is greatly needed and appreciated, this year more than most. It is a large museum with a small budget with one full-time employee and operated primarily through donations like yours and through volunteers like Eva. Eva works at the gate every Saturday and Sunday, rain or shine. I really don't know how we would get along without her. She is a vital part of our organization. Thank you for honoring her service this way. It means a lot."

Sherri requested that her \$100.00 donation be made by the GCU to the Conyngham Valley Civic Organization (CVCO) in Conyngham, PA. The donation was used towards startup costs for a drive-through chicken dinner sale. Over 400 meals were sold with proceeds benefitting the community pool, gymnasium and youth programming.



Eva Anderson-Erb (left) presenting a donation to Tamera Schutz, Director of Pioneer Village Museum.



Vanessa Cara (secretary), Christina Falvello, P.A.C. (president) and Sherri Homanko, Pharm.D. (CVCO director and GCU member).

## 2020 Fraternalist of the Year

CONTINUED from PAGE 3

pulled off the event which included a parade, vendors, tricky trays and entertainment in 6 weeks.

With the Conyngham Valley Civic Organization (CVCO), Sherri is part of a volunteer board that is responsible for managing the community pool and gymnasium. At CVCO's Valley Day fundraiser, which defrays expenses for the pool, Sherri is in charge of co-managing 10-14 carnival game stands and obtaining all of the prizes year-round to stock the stands.

In addition to the above, she also or-

ganizes the annual Baby Parade; volunteers for the Helping Hands Society at their annual gift wrapping at the Laurel Mall, office games event and Telethon; was keynote speaker for the Hazleton Chamber's 41<sup>st</sup> Annual Academic Awards for graduating seniors in the Hazleton Area and twice a year, Sherri visits the pharmaceuticals class at the Hazleton Area Academy of Sciences to discuss her career as a pharmacist, college life, her experiences and general advice for students.

Sherri received a plaque present-

ed by GCU National Director Dorothy Foran and last year's GCU Fraternalist of the Year Agnes Rohrbach. She chose to split her \$500.00 award between her parish of St. John BC Church in Hazleton, PA and the Miss Greater Hazleton Scholarship Organization.

Nomination forms for the 2021 GCU Fraternalist of the Year will be available for completion on the GCU website in January.

## Invested in Education

GCU believes that our young people are tomorrow's leaders... the people carrying our faith and traditions forward.

The GCU scholarship program allows us to invest in their education and our future.

GCU offers scholarship opportunities for high school seniors and full time college students.

New membership requirements allow for all members as of **December 31, 2019** to apply for GCU Scholarship assistance.

Applications are available for completion **ONLINE ONLY**, through **December 31, 2020**.

Go to [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com), click on the **Member** tab at the top of the page and choose **Member Benefits** for complete details and application!

[GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com)



## GCU Student Debt Program Continues in 2020

The GCU Board of Directors realizes that many young members complete college with significant Student Debt and has approved continuation of the GCU Student Debt Program. The budget established will provide up to 100 awards in 2020. The program assists GCU members with a portion of their Student Debt. The program is open to both new applicants and to those that received the award in 2018 and/or 2019.

Members that qualify are eligible for four annual awards of \$500.<sup>00</sup> each. Members are required to apply annually to receive the award. Requirements include: GCU membership as of 12/31/2019 with a permanent life insurance certificate or annuity with a current balance of at least \$2,000.<sup>00</sup>. Proof of at least two years of payments on their student loan(s) and volunteer involvement will also be required. Complete details, program requirements and application are available at: [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com)—Members—Member Benefits—Student Debt.

All applications must be completed online. Once membership requirements have been verified, the applicant will receive an email with the additional requirements. Awards are presented on a first come, first served basis, based on the date when all required information has been received and not initial application date.



## Basilian Sisters Joyfully Celebrate Jubilees



Front: Sr. Salome Yanochko, Sr. Leocadia Sevachko and Sr. Bernarda Sevachko. Back: Sr. Ruth Plante-Provincial, Archbishop William C. Skurla and Monastery Chaplain-Rev. Jerome Botsko.

Beginning with a Divine Liturgy of Thanksgiving on Monday, July 20, three Sisters of St. Basil celebrated their anniversaries of religious life: Diamond Jubilarian, Sister Leocadia Sevachko, and 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Jubilarians, Sister Salome Yanochko and Sister Fabian Krassa,

The lives of these Sisters are all about an affirmation of love. At Baptism these Sisters were given the wonderful gift of faith and brought into the family of love. They began a journey, a journey motivated by love of God, a journey by which they were drawn to live in a community of love. Each in her own way translated this love into service to the Church. Archbishop William Skurla congratulated the Sister Jubilarians and thanked them for faithfully living out that love in their lives and in service to the Church.

Sr. Leocadia entered the Sisters of St. Basil from St. Nicholas parish in Youngstown, OH. Sr. Leocadia's teaching assignments spanned 57 years in elementary education. Her assignments included several years when she served as both teacher and principal. The first to enter the community, Sr. Leocadia has the distinction of being one of three sibling sisters in community; Sr. Dorothy, now deceased, and Sr. Bernarda. After completing her final mission in the Youngstown Area Churches, Sr. Leocadia now resides at the Motherhouse.

Sr. Salome's home parish is St. Mary's in Freeland, PA. From 1953, with her first assigned to teach, Sr. Salome was busy shaping the lives of first and second graders. Sister brought to this ministry the gift of her gentle ways and her enthusiasm for any advances in methodology. She took

great delight in learning and using whatever technology was available to help those entrusted to her care. Now retired from the teaching ministry, Sr. Salome resides at the Motherhouse assisting in sacristan duties.

Sr. Fabian entered the community from St. John the Baptist Church in Uniontown, PA. Her ministry experience was also largely focused on education, both as a teacher and principal. In a departure from this ministry, Sr. Fabian desired to serve in Rome, Italy. There she worked for seven years in the library of the Pontifical Oriental Institute. Precious to her of her time in Rome were the many times she was able to be at audiences of Pope St. John Paul II. Sr. Fabian presently is a resident at Mt. Macrina Manor.

At the festive dinner following the Divine Liturgy, Sr. Ruth thanked each of the Sisters for the special and unique gifts each brought to her ministry. Although they are often fondly remembered by past students, the countless lives they touched are known only to God. May God grant these Jubilarians many blessed, happy, and spiritually fruitful years!

**Susan McCarthy**



Steve and Bonnie Durkit on their wedding day.

## Steve and Bonnie Durkit Celebrate 55<sup>th</sup> Anniversary

Congratulations to Steve & Bonnie Durkit on their 55<sup>th</sup> Wedding Anniversary. They exchanged vows on August 7, 1965 at Holy Trinity Ukrainian Catholic Church in Carnegie, PA.

They have been blessed with seven children, Steve, David, Janet (Wojtak), Melanie (Lio), DeAnn (McCoy), Andrew and Amy Sue (Seiser), as well as 14 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

Steve and Bonnie are parishioners at St. Stephen Byzantine Catholic Cathedral and members of Lodge 999 in Phoenix, AZ

## St. Nicholas Virtualthon

### A GCU Community Outreach Event to Benefit the Ss. Cyril & Methodius Seminary

The 2020 St. Nicholas Celebration to benefit the Ss. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary has been canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In an effort to provide a way for those who traditionally support the Seminary through this event or who would like to make a donation to the Seminary, the GCU Board of Directors has established the St. Nicholas Virtualthon—A GCU Community Outreach Event to Benefit the Ss. Cyril & Methodius Byzantine Catholic Seminary. This is a Matching Funds event with the GCU Board pledging to match up to \$10,000.<sup>00</sup> in total donations. If you would like to donate to this effort, please visit our website to pay by credit card at [www.GCUusa.com](http://www.GCUusa.com) or if you prefer to pay by check, please make payable and mail to: St. Nicholas Virtualthon, 5400 Tuscarawas Road, Beaver, PA 15009.



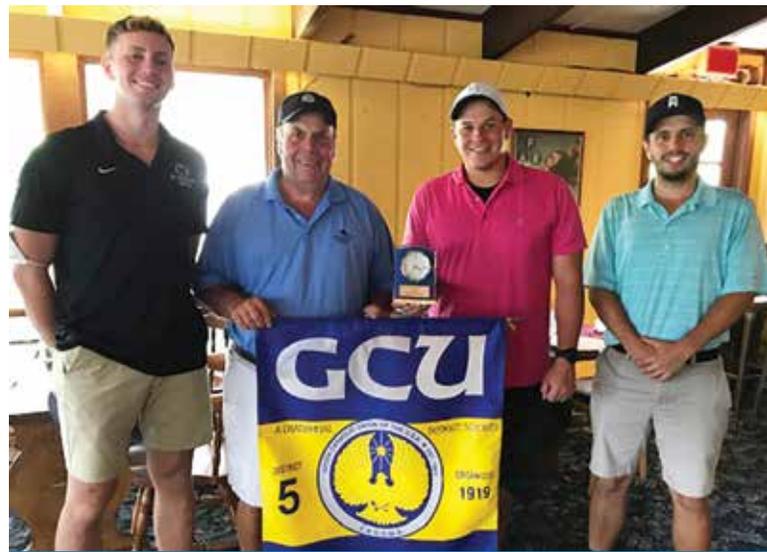
# District 5

**Annual Golf Tournament** | The District 5 annual golf tournament was held on Saturday, August 1 at Sugarloaf Golf Club. The officers and members were excited and appreciative that the tournament could still be held during the pandemic. The owners of Sugarloaf Golf Club, Wayne & Judy Knelly, assured the committee everything would work out. They made sure that not only the golf, but more importantly the food portion of the event adhered to all Pennsylvania COVID-19 guidelines.

The event drew 82 golfers, the most participants in a very long time. It was so good to see old familiar faces and meet new participants. The team of Ed Keil, Keith Hampton, Anthony Shaver and Ryan Hettes had low gross and took home the trophies (engraved clocks), along with a monetary prize. First Flight Low Net 1<sup>st</sup> Place was Scott Schukraft, Andrew Schukraft, Joey Hardisky and Steve Doziak; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place was Matt Montville, Mike Edwards, Dave Marigi and Shamus



Crystal Vladika, Antonio Cordaro and Greg Vladika.



Tournament Champions, Anthony Shaver, Ed Keil, Keith Hampton and Ryan Hettes.

Gartley and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place was Ed Dolinish III, Ryan Lis, Paul Kania and Justin Blondo. Second Flight Low Net 1<sup>st</sup> Place was Greg & Crystal Vladika and Antonio Cordaro; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place was The Pezak team of Paul, Craig, Gary and Corey and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place was the Batyko team, Paul III, Matthew, Chris and Phil. Third Flight Low Net 1<sup>st</sup> Place was Sue & Jerry Grohowski, Jim Slabinski, and Mike Seman; 2<sup>nd</sup> Place was Jon Fiorelli, Ryan Cardoni, Dave Seman and Aaron Koval and 3<sup>rd</sup> Place was Dan Harris, Lori Umphred, Katie Blaine and Ryan Tripak. Proximity Prize winners included John Bubblo (2), Joyce Tinner (2), Chris Brace, Diane Grega, Linda Montville, Matt Montville, Bob Peters, Andrew Schukraft, Jim Slabinski and Joe Zarick. Twelve golfers hit the green on Hole 17, for a share in the Pot-of-Gold, Chris Batyko, Steve Doziak, Mike Fiorelli, Keith Hampton, Paul Kania, Ryan Lis, Dave Marigi, Bob Montville, Mark Pegula, Paul Pezak, Andrew Schukraft and Dave Seman.

One could not ask for a better day to be outdoors—the weather was perfect for golfing. The tournament concluded with a Pig Roast with all the trimmings, followed by the presentation of tournament winners and a door prize for all. Thanks goes out to the GCU Home Office for the Fraternal Grant for door prizes, GCU cups with sunscreen, hand sanitizer, gum and the preparation of entry forms. Thanks also to the hole sponsors, prize donors and all of the participants. A special thank you to our Pot-of-Gold and Hole-in-One verifier, Janice Dragan, who gave up her Saturday to sit on Hole 17. Save next year's date, Saturday, August 7, 2021.

Ed Keil | Athletic Director

# District 15

**October Update** | Welcome to Fall, everyone. The days are shorter and cooler and the trees are beginning to turn golden, crimson and orange. Soon we'll all be planning our Thanksgiving dinners and family gatherings. Some of these may be virtual celebrations, but no less meaningful. I am happy to share our District 15 update.

Following the GCU Board of Directors meeting in August, all lodge and district officers were notified of the Board's guidelines for the remaining months of 2020. The changes are in response to the ongoing concerns about COVID-19.

As a fraternal society, the GCU lodges and districts are committed to social and benevolent activities. Yet during the pandemic our efforts have all but been shut down. As President of District 15 I was very happy to receive specific guidelines from our GCU Board sent in a letter from President/CEO George Juba on August 28. Specifically, the Board recommends that lodges and districts:

- ★ Suspend all activities unless they may be conducted virtually or adhering to the various local guidelines established.
- ★ May maintain current officers for 2021.
- ★ Continue to submit quarterly financial statements, volunteer hours and other sponsored activities.

Furthermore, lodges and districts are NOT required to hold an annual meeting this year; subsidies will NOT be affected. Lodges and districts will receive their usual subsidy.

District 15 Board members voted to support District 15 churches and Mt. St. Macrina as these institutions struggle with fewer donations during this time. St. Nicholas Chapel in Beaver, PA; St. George BC Church in Aliquippa, PA; St. Mary BC Church in Ambridge, PA; St. John the Baptist BC Church in Lyndora, PA; St. Mary BC Church in Weirton, WV; St. John BC Church in Mingo Junction, OH; and the Sisters of St. Basil at Mt. St. Macrina in Uniontown, PA each received a check for \$500.00 to be used as needed.

I applaud the GCU Board of Directors and Mr. Juba, for the abundance of caution for our members as reflected in their deliberations and ultimate guidelines for the rest of the year. Clearly, these were not easy decisions; we are grateful for your leadership.

The District 15 Board offers our continued prayers for our members, and for the continued success of the GCU. We look toward 2021 with hope for an end to the pandemic and return to our regular fraternal events.

Elizabeth Harbist | President

# Lodge News

## Lodge 57

BROWNSVILLE, PA

### Flea Market Rummage Sale

St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church held their annual Flea Market Rummage Sale September 8-14, 2020. Helping

with the event was sale coordinator and GCU member, Melody Yeardie. The event also included a bake sale with homemade cookies and turnovers.



Jean Mangini and Becky Thomas.



Jean Mangini, Becky Thomas and Melody Yeardie.

Helping in the kitchen were Fr. Chris Burke, GCU member Becky Thomas and kitchen coordinator Jean Mangini.

This sale will help with the upkeep and repairs of St. Nicholas Church and the local community. At the end of the sale, clothing and shoes were donated to a

community organization—Crosskeys and other area churches with upcoming rummage sales were allowed to help themselves to left over items.

Jean Mangini | Parishioner  
Bernadette Loya-Karoffa | Publicity Director

## Lodge 62

PUNXSUTAWNEY, PA

### First Confessions

SS. Peter & Paul Church had three children make their First Confessions. The event took place on the parish's patron saints' feast day in June. Each child received a Byzantine Cross and a certificate.

Following the Liturgy, the children and their families enjoyed a dinner and an evening of play at the home of Kylee Raybuck's grandparents. Approximately 35 people attended. Thanks to the Fraternal Grant from the GCU.

Helen Meko | President



Fr. Vasyl Kadar with Vasyl Kadar Jr., Kylee Raybuck and Rowan Meko.



Paul Kaderabek celebrating his birthday with a few lodge members.

## Lodge 66

WHITING, IN

### Birthday Party

On September 13<sup>th</sup> Lodge 66 held its quarterly meeting and celebrated the 75<sup>th</sup> birthday of Paul Kaderabek. During the meeting, Father Michal Bucko presented the history of the Byzantine church in Europe with videos and slides then led a discussion with the members including questions about the presentation.

Peter Baranko | Secretary-Treasurer

## Lodge 81

UNIONTOWN, PA

### Summer Activities

Through the summer Lodge 81 members have continued to be involved at St. John BC Parish as well as in the local Uniontown community.

### Community

In May, the GCU Home Office offered a donation of \$1,000.00 to local food



Richard & Marcia Harrer helping at the Food Drive.

banks which were in great need during the pandemic. Stephen Petruska contacted James Stark of the Fayette County Community Food Bank to which the donation was made.

The Sunday Rosary group that meets at Lourdes Grotto at Mount St. Macrina, helped celebrate Sister Barbara Jean Mihalchick's birthday on August 16. The group collected \$220.00 which was given to Polaris, an organization against human trafficking an important charitable cause of Sister Barbara Jean. This amount surpassed the \$200.00 goal that Sister Barbara Jean had hoped for. After the Rosary recitation, cupcakes and balloons were shared with those attending.

Richard & Marcia Harrer gave their time to the community in various ways. Richard has been volunteering cutting grass at Cozy Corner in Mount Pleasant, PA. Marcia was asked to be a part of the Mount St. Macrina Virtual Pilgrimage. Her role was to narrate the children's presentation—giving a detailed description of the icon of "Our Lady of Perpetual Help." (This can be viewed on YouTube or the Sisters of St. Basil website.)



Gerry Dorobish and Sister Barbara Jean.

### Parish

Steve Petruska continued cantoring at St. John Church as well as helping on the premises. Steve cleared the social hall by moving tables and chairs to prepare the area for the restoration of the social hall floor which was damaged by flooding last summer.

On the weekend of September 19-20, Lodge 81 held its Annual Food Drive. Due to COVID-19 restrictions the officers decided to accept monetary donations only. Donations will be collected through October 4 and be given to local food banks.

On Catechetical Sunday, September 20, Lodge 81 officers and catechists Gerry Dorobish,

CONTINUED

## Lodge 81 CONTINUED



Gerry Dorobish with Carynn & Steven Popson at registration.



Gerry Dorobish and Bonnie Balas.

Marcia Harrer, James Mihalko and Bonnie Balas received a blessing from Father Ron Larko as part of the commissioning service. They also took registrations of students for the upcoming year.

The 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Rosary Walk was held on Sunday, September 20 with masks and social distancing. The 2<sup>nd</sup> Glorious Mystery was recited in the St. John Church parking lot. A makeshift Marian shrine was prepared using an icon of Mary which was donated by the late Dorothy Petrisko Rossini, a longtime GCU member and a ruchnyk

(icon covering) donated by Mark Jesko. Bonnie Balas led the singing of Marian hymns and Gerry Dorobish led the prayers of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Glorious Mystery.

At the August 9 quarterly meeting it was agreed to make donations to the Mount St. Macrina Virtual Pilgrimage and to St. John Church for the use of the meeting room. (The 2<sup>nd</sup> quarter lodge meeting was cancelled due to the pandemic.)

Bonnie Balas | VP & Publicity Director

## UPCOMING LODGE 81 EVENTS

### 39<sup>th</sup> Annual Carpatho-Rusyn Celebration-CANCELED

**Sunday, October 25**

Check parish website for any future events: <http://www.stjohnbaptist-byzcath-uniontown.org> or e-mail: [stjohnthebaptistuniontown@gmail.com](mailto:stjohnthebaptistuniontown@gmail.com).

### Quarterly Meeting

**Sunday, November 15**

**Following Divine Liturgy**

St. John the Baptist BC Church  
201 East Main Street,  
Uniontown, PA 15401

## UPCOMING LODGE 92 EVENT

### 13<sup>th</sup> Annual Stuffed Chicken Breast Dinner

**Sunday, November 1**

**11:30 AM-1 PM**

**\$10 Take Out & Drive Thru ONLY - Dinner includes stuffed chicken breast, potatoes, vegetables and dessert.**

LaSalle Auditorium Hall  
309 First Avenue, Jessup, PA

Benefits Holy Ghost Church renovations

For ticket information: call Michaela Mancak at 570-489-1304; Greg Dick at 570-489-8723 or Tim Keller at 570-878-2481.

## GCU Lodge 93

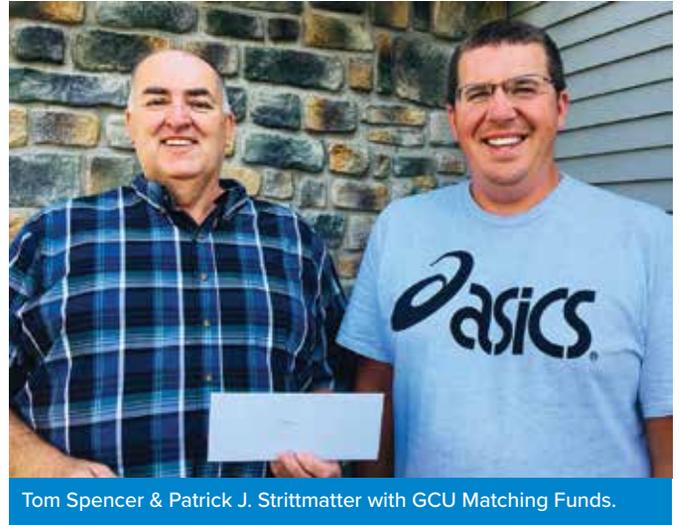
NORTHERN CAMBRIA, PA

### COVID-19 Cancellations

The novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic has shut down most people’s daily activities, from going to work to socializing with friends. Unfortunately, the pandemic has also forced GCU lodges and districts to reformat fundraisers. Amid Coronavirus, fundraising remains an important source of financial support.

### Parish Expansion Dinner

Lodge 93 was able to sponsor a Non-Byzantine Parish Expansion Matching Funds program on July 11. Tom Spencer, chairperson, was the organizer of the event at the Elderton Presbyterian Church located in Elderton, PA. Everyone likes to eat, so with CDC guidelines in effect, a takeout only Chicken Dinner was held. Dinners were delivered curbside. The event raised \$1,950.<sup>00</sup>. Thanks to the GCU Matching Funds program another \$1,000.<sup>00</sup> was gained by the church.



Tom Spencer & Patrick J. Strittmatter with GCU Matching Funds.

Connie Strittmatter | Secretary-Treasurer & Fraternal Director

### 2020 Year End Processing Cut Off Dates for Withdrawals, Distributions, Cash Surrenders

The entire GCU staff is committed to providing exceptional customer service to GCU agents and members. The staff is in the process of planning for all of your year end requests to assure that each request is addressed in a timely and efficient manner. Please be informed that the GCU has established a cut-off date of **Wednesday, December 16, 2020** for receiving Annuity Partial Withdrawal (including RMD & Inherited IRA distributions), Annuity Cash Surrender and Life Insurance Cash Surrender requests for processing by Tuesday, December 29, 2020. This includes requests received via fax, emails, web requests & mail via courier or the US Postal Service. **Please note that a W-9 Form will need to be completed and forwarded with any requests for withdrawals or surrenders.**

If the information is received and in good order by the end of business on Wednesday, December 16 it will be processed by Tuesday, December 29 for the 2020 tax reporting period.

If requests and all documentation are received after close of business on December 16, the GCU will work to complete the request by December 29, but cannot guarantee processing before year end.

Should you have any questions, please call the Member and Agent Service Staff at 855-306-0607.

#### 2020 GCU Holiday Closings

**Thanksgiving**

Thursday, November 26  
Friday, November 27

**Christmas**

Thursday, December 24  
Friday, December 25

**New Year’s**

Thursday, December 31  
Friday, January 1, 2021

## Lodge 109

LYNDORA, PA

### Helping Hands Day

During the week of June 14<sup>th</sup>, the grounds of St. John the Baptist B.C. Church were prepared for the annual spring planting of new annuals and trimming of shrubs. An extensive project, under the direction of Fr. Radko, was undertaken to replace or remove older overgrown shrubs in order to open up the front of the main church entrance. Parishioner John Baycura, and Father have been working long

hours in the hot sun to finish this task.

In addition to the annuals planted and planters prepared to beautify the entrances of the church, a window box and hanging planters were placed in front of the rectory as well.

Thanks to the GCU Home Office for the Helping Hands Fraternal Grant to help purchase the plants and supplies for the project.



Helen Musko and Janet Uram filling planters for the church entrances.

### Centennial Birthday Celebration for Helen Meaders

Summer activity for Lodge 109 has been sharply curtailed due to the Coronavirus, but the centennial birthday celebration of Helen Meaders went off without a hitch. It was a beautiful, warm and sunny day for the outdoor party which was held in the parking lot of St. John BC Church Religious Education building, across the street from the church. A catered box lunch was served to friends and family who were in attendance.

Helen's vocation of service and dedication to her church began in 1947 when Archbishop Metropolitan Stephen Kocisko, then a young priest at St. John, asked her to form and direct a church choir. She proceeded to write a master score in four part harmony for the choir, which she directed for 13 years. At that time, the choir had over 40 members and performed in churches throughout the Archeparchy. Helen sang in the choir under the direction of Art Lazar as well as the United Choir of the Eparchy of Pittsburgh for another 17 years.

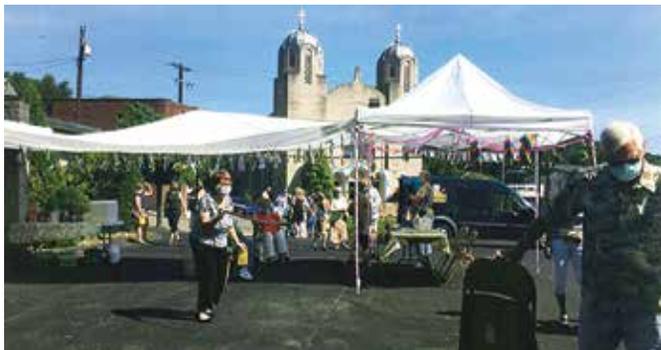
Helen's GCU activities included being past president of Lodge 109, past vice president of District 15, a sponsor of the St. Nicholas Chapel at Seven Oaks and a member of Seven Oaks Country Club. Helen also was a delegate to many GCU National Conventions where she has served on the Credentials Committee.

Helen's contributions to Lodge 109's activities and fund raisers are too numerous to mention. She began the annual Flag Ceremony observance, helped recruit for blood drives, made decorated Easter eggs to sell and helped fund the bus for the Mt. St. Macrina Pilgrimage in Uniontown, PA.

Janet Uram | Secretary-Treasurer



Helen admires her birthday cake at her milestone 100<sup>th</sup> celebration.



Friends and family begin to arrive for the outdoor celebration with St. John's Church domes outlined in the background's clear blue sky.



GCU Lodge 144 Auditor Audrey Peek and President Mary Ellen Oslick with officers from Denver Police Department 3.



Lodge 144 President Mary Ellen Oslick with fireman from Denver Fire Department Station 2.

## Lodge 144

DENVER, CO

### Remembering 911

GCU Lodge 144 was privileged to provide lunch for the officers and detectives of Denver Police Department District 3 and for the firemen of Denver Fire Department Station 2.

Thank you to the men and women who patrol our streets and keep them safe; to the detectives, investigators and undercover people who find and

eliminate trouble before it starts and to the highly skilled firefighters who work to combat and extinguish fires and rescue the injured.

Firefighters take steps to prevent fires, act as EMTs, investigate the cause of fires and respond to natural disasters. The fire fighter must be able to move heavy objects, operate unruly equipment and carry victims from burning buildings all while wearing heavy cumbersome safety gear. They have more courage than most of us.

The lodge is grateful to these selfless men and women who protect and serve the local community daily. May we never forget the lives that were lost and the lives that were forever changed on that fateful day of September 11, 2001.

Mary Ellen Oslick | President

## Lodge 151

NEW YORK, NY

### Lodge Meeting Brings Back Memories

Lodge 151 held its 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter meeting in the outdoor seating area at Umberto's in New Hyde Park, NY. During the meeting members enjoyed reminiscing while looking at older pictures of GCU families. Attendees shared some of their memories.

President Marge Russell remembered her mom always wanted to stay home but when she went to a GCU meeting she was in her glory seeing the Dietz family and others. She really liked talking with lodge members and enjoyed their company.

Secretary Laura Muhlfeld remembers when her mother did not want to go on a GCU trip, she had suffered a stroke and had limited mobility. Chris Hulak convinced her to go on the trip to Vermont. As they boarded the bus everyone said hello and told her how happy they were she was there. Someone called her name on the bus and it was GCU member Mary Krull who frequented the same hair salon. It turned out to be a wonderful experience. Laura believes that this trip and



Lodge 151 reminiscing past meetings & past members.

other trips they went on, did more to aid in her mother's recovery than all the medicines and doctor visits.

Marie Dzadik remembers Barbara Kovalcik at GCU Day at the races at Belmont Race track. Barbara kept giving all the winning horses to other GCU members. She was a very loving and caring person.

Treasurer Chris Hulak feels that being a member of the GCU has been a dynamic experience. She was a member of the Sikoryak, Michnya, Mikula and Hulak families, all very active with GCU. Now the GCU has a

CONTINUED

## Lodge 151 CONTINUED



Chris Hulak and her extended family.

new generation—a nephew, nieces, sister and cousins. Chris and her mother Julia experienced great joy on many GCU Lodge 151 excursions and conventions. They were GCU members for decades. A GCU event that many of Chris' family attended was the changing of Lodge 151 presidents. Charles Sikoryak was president for 15 years and retired. A Liturgy and celebration were held for his retirement and Marge Russell became the new lodge president and continues to hold the office, today.

Marie Panchuk has fond memories of her Uncle Steve Panchuk. He passed away in 2003, not before he had several memorable years of GCU bowling on Sundays and with District 7 once a month. He was also an avid golfer who had happily taken his nephew Gregory on many road trips with him including to Seven Oaks to play golf. He was proud of being part of the GCU golfing and bowling community. He made many friends and memories along the way.

Patricia Dietz remembers her father Peter Dietz. She remembers how proud he was of the two bowling leagues he helped to found and participate in for over 50 years. He organized and was an officer in the GCU Lodge 151 Mixed League and GCU District 7 Mixed Travel League. It was not about the winning but about getting together and enjoying each others company.

Mike Knapp has very good



President Charles Sikoryak presenting an award to Peter Dietz for his lodge accomplishments.



Trip to Ellis Island.



Remembering Eve Knapp & Peter Gnall.



Laura & her mom.

memories of his wife, Eve and brother-in-law, Peter Gnall. He recalls how Eve tremendously enjoyed the day her brother Peter's retirement was recognized at St. Andrew Church, where he cantored for 36 years. A special Liturgy by Archbishop William and Fr. Jack was held. Mike will never forget how happy Eve and Peter were to see old friends, family and have Peter's accomplishments acknowledged.

Ann Kandrato reminisced about her summer trips with family, sister Maryellen, brother-in-law Bill, and her GCU family. Every June bags were packed and off they would go. One year was to the Green Mountain State-Vermont, with its beautiful mountains resplendent in green lakes, covered wagons and maple syrup tasting. Then it was Washington, DC. The following years were spent at Lake George, Saratoga and its beautiful racetrack, gardens and the Million Dollar Beach. Another June the family visited Montreal and Quebec and pilgrimages to St. Joseph Oratory and St. Anne Beupre, Montgomery Falls, and the St. Lawrence River enjoying poutine-cest magnifique! Wonderful trips and wonderful memories. A journey is best measured in friends rather than miles. My GCU family, Thank You, Thank You, Thank You for all the memories.

Lodge 151 had an exciting trip to Ellis Island and took photos on the ship. Pictured is Emily & Vinnie Panchuk with the Late John Levkulich. It was an amazing trip but just weeks after taking the pictures the terrible events of 9-11 took place and the twin towers of the World Trade Center were gone. No one can forget that day.

I hope you enjoyed some of our members' memories. Especially in these times it was nice to reminisce.

Marge Russell | President



Lodge 151 meeting with deceased members Susie Knapp, Steven Panchuk and Barbara Kovalcik.



Sunday League-1970.

## Lodge 254

HILLSBOROUGH, NJ

### Senior High Scholarship-Congratulations Savanna!

Savanna Bezick received the 2020 senior scholarship award from Lodge 254 at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church. She will be attending the University of North Texas-Denton as a music major and psychology minor. She will also be on scholarship from the University. In the past four years, Savanna has earned exemplary academic grades and given of herself in many activities both at school and at St. Mary parish. Her musical talents have been shown as a member of the prestigious Princeton Girl's Choir; as a flutist performing with her high-school wind ensemble & the Eastern Wind Symphony of NJ. At St. Mary Savanna began singing at church services 10 years ago. She is presently an assistant cantor, leading the responses at one of the Liturgies each week. She also is a member of the ECF program, instructing the kindergarten children. Savanna, along with the entire Bezick family, are members of Lodge 254. Along with brother Zachary, she spearheads the annual Toys-for-Tots drive prior to Christmas. Lodge 254 & St. Mary Parish wish Savanna great success in the coming



Savanna and her family with Lodge 254 President Elias Zareva and Fr. James Badeaux.

years. Fr. James Badeaux is the pastor at St. Mary. Following the presentation an informal reception was enjoyed by parishioners and family.



Father Jim with Elias and Savanna.

### Ordination of Fr. Paul West

Saturday, July 18, 2020 was a memorable day for all at St. Mary Byzantine Catholic Church in Hillsborough, NJ. Deacon Paul West received his holy orders from Bishop Kurt Burnette and entered the priesthood. The following day, Fr. West celebrated his first Liturgy at St. Mary Church and blessed cars afterward in observance of the Feast of St. Elias. There was time for photos and a special presentation from the members of Lodge 254. Best wishes Father West and family!! Mnohaja Lita!

Elias Zareva | President &  
Charlie Bazaral | Vice President & Secretary



Lodge 254 President Elias Zareva and Vice President Charlie Bazaral presenting a gift to Fr. Paul and his family on his ordination.



Bishop Kurt and all the clergy that participated in Fr. Paul's ordination.



Mark Gasser.

## Lodge 268 MINGO JUNCTION, OH

### Helping Hands Day

Due to the Coronavirus, Lodge 268 Helping Hands was a little different this year. Throughout the summer volunteers went to the church weeded, watered the flowers and cleaned around the church. Two tree stumps were cut down, new dirt, mulch and flowers were planted in the planters in front of the church.

Carla Gasser | President

## UPCOMING LODGE 360 EVENT

### Food & Personal Care Items Drive

October 18-November 22

Non-Perishable Food

New Personal Care Items

St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church  
463 Robinson Road, Campbell, OH 44405

Benefits—Our Community Kitchen  
551 Mahoning Avenue, Youngstown, OH 44502

For more information: call Secretary-Treasurer Lisa Romito at 330-881-8171.

## Lodge 401 NANTY GLO, PA

### Walk Thru Basket Fundraiser

The Lodge 401 Walk Thru Basket Fundraiser was a huge success! The event was held the weekend of September 26 & 27, with a marvelous turn out! The fundraiser featured a total of 126 baskets as well as a 50/50 drawing and delicious gobs. Gross receipts totaled \$5,011.<sup>00</sup> for the two-day event.

Thanks to the loyal gang (pictured) who work tirelessly at every function and event and of course to all who came out to support this fundraiser. Proceeds benefit the St. Nicholas Church Heating Fuel Fund. A special thank you to the GCU Home Office for supporting this Parish Matching Funds event!

Lori & Steve Bender | Secretary-Treasurer



Hard workers who made the basket fundraiser a success.



Steve Bender making his raffle choices.



Fr. Ed Pyo filling out his tickets.



Helping Hands Day.

**Lodge 442**

BOARDMAN & YOUNGSTOWN, OH

**Food Drive**

Lodge 442 sponsored a Food Drive for The Second Harvest Food Bank of the Mahoning Valley throughout the months of March and April 2020 at St. Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Youngstown and Infant Jesus of Prague Byzantine Catholic Church in Boardman. Almost 3 full barrels were collected during the pandemic.

**Helping Hands**

A Helping Hands Day was sponsored on May 9<sup>th</sup> on the grounds of Infant Jesus of Prague BC Church. More than 25 attended to clean up and help landscape the grounds and updated church sign. A socially distanced light lunch followed.

**Anniversary Donation**

Lodge 442 donated to the 50<sup>th</sup> Golden Anniversary Commemorative Book for the anniversary of Infant Jesus of Prague BC Church on South Avenue in Boardman, OH which is home to SS. Peter & Paul Parish. GCU members and officers also attended the celebratory Liturgy and socially distanced dinner that followed.

**Elaine Chachko** | Activities Director



Golden Anniversary Liturgy & Celebration.

**Can You Help Us?**

In the process of updating contact information for all of our members, GCU has uncovered the following members that we have totally lost contact with. If you can assist us with an address or phone number for any of the members listed here, please call the GCU Call Center at 855-306-0607.

Mary Baka  
 Alex Bodner  
 James I. Campbell  
 Mary K. Colangelo  
 Frank Danko  
 John Deak  
 Joan DeMarco  
 Joann Gabor  
 Norman S. Gajda  
 Peter George  
 William R. Haywood  
 Jane F. Healey  
 Basil Hilnich

Michael Hilton  
 Sharon K. Hrinko  
 Katherine S. Keogh  
 Joseph Kobal  
 Edward Kraly  
 Ann Marie Lengyel  
 Charles D. Lewis  
 Margaret Mateja  
 Ann M. Mihalko  
 Dorothy Miller  
 Nancy Mitchell  
 Mary E. Mulvey  
 Charlene Nagy

Theresa A. Naro  
 Brenda A. Oberding  
 Julia Olijar  
 Jose Oritz  
 Christine Pasterick  
 Robin S. Phillips  
 Robert A. Pinchak  
 Helen Pisko  
 Geraldine Pondok  
 Angela D. Radocesky  
 Geraldine Sabol  
 Gloria J. Shifra  
 Amber Jill Smith

Ann Marie Smith  
 John Soga  
 Carole Tiskiewicz  
 Arthur Visokey  
 Rev. George Zuback

## Greater Hazleton Regional Lodge (GHRL)

HAZLETON, PA

It is the first day of autumn, as I sit here typing some GHRL tidbits. If you have the opportunity to take a countryside ride, be sure to enjoy the autumn foliage. The Northeastern Pennsylvania area is always great at showing off Mother Nature's works—the splendor of the trees fall foliage is breath taking.

### 2020 Cancellations

It was decided to cancel the rest of the events for 2020 (*the lodge's quarterly meeting and the St. Nicholas Dinner*) to help prevent the spread of COVID-19.

**Remember Stay Safe—Stay Home and Stay Healthy!!**

### Bowling League

The GCU Bowling league began on Wednesday, September 2. Hopefully, the league will continue to bowl for the entire season without interruption. A welcome is sent out to the two new bowlers in the league: Diane Green and Linda Kuba. Safety precautions are being taken with the league and all bowlers are required to wear masks while bowling. This little precautionary measure will help a lot in regards to the spreading of the virus.

### Notes

Since we did not have a quarterly meeting to elect officers for 2021, the officers from 2020 will preside over the new year. Details on meetings, etc. will be provided at the end of the year. Each representative from the parishes will be contacted and a schedule of events (hopefully) will be planned.

Sunday, November 8 St. Michael BC Church in McAdoo, PA is having a takeout Spaghetti Dinner to raise funds for improvements to the church. It will be by pre-sale only and the deadline to order tickets is Saturday,



GHRL member and GCU 2020 Fraternalist of the Year Sherri Homanko presents Fr. Jerome Wolbert of St. John BC Church with a donation from her award.

October 31. For further information, please call Margie at 570-929-1859 or 570-436-8617.

Veterans Day will be celebrated on Wednesday, November 11, if you happen to know a veteran or see one, give them a salute and thank them for their service to our country.

Let us all give thanks on Thanksgiving, Thursday, November 26, for our families and all who have given their best to help during this time of crisis throughout the world. Keep in your prayers and thoughts all those who have been devastated (*both living and deceased*) by the COVID-19 virus—hopefully this pandemic will be over very soon. ***If your church is open for prayer, stop by and take the time out to say a prayer for everyone (especially all the EMT's, nurses, doctors and all healthcare professionals) and all the living and deceased that were subject to this virus. May God Bless Us All!***

As always, I will try to keep everyone updated on a list of activities, but if you are computer savvy, check out the GCU website for updates. If you have any questions, please feel free to call Agnes at 570-454-4869 or e-mail [agnesr@ptd.net](mailto:agnesr@ptd.net)

Until next time, take care and May God Bless.

**Agnes Rohrbach** | Secretary & Activities Director

## Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge (CPRL) GREENFIELD, CARRICK & SOUTHSIDE-PITTSBURGH, PA

### Annual Pirohi Sale

This past Easter season St. Pius BC Church in Carrick, PA held its annual pirohi sales. Even though sales were cut short due to the pandemic, the parish still managed to sell over 840 dozen pirohi!

The pirohi that remained unsold were offered at a drive through “frozen only” pirohi sale on July 11 & 17. The response of the public was overwhelming.

St. Pius parishioners are so very grateful to Central Pittsburgh Regional Lodge and the GCU Home Office for the Parish Matching Funds support of this endeavor. With the closure of the churches for several months because of COVID-19, the money comes in handy to help with the upkeep of the church and to maintain the CDC guidelines for reopening.

Beth Gulyasy | CPRL Saint Pius X Trustee



The many hard workers who donated their time and talents.



# Southeast Pittsburgh Regional Lodge (SEPRL)

CLAIRTON & MUNHALL, PA

## Take Out Dinners

Several SEPRL members assisted with take-out meals offered over three weekends, one in July, August and September, at St. John BC Cathedral in Munhall. Stuffed cabbage, mashed potatoes, vegetables, roll & butter were served in July & August. Over 800 dinners were sold over the two weekends. The third dinner, served the weekend of September 19 & 20, was a Cathedral specialty-Chicken Supreme Dinner. This was a favorite back in the 80's & 90's when parishioners did all of the catering at the Cathedral Center. A total of 281 dinners of chicken breast in a white wine sauce, rice pilaf, vegetables and roll & butter, were sold. Along with the dinners, a bake sale was offered featuring Cathedral Kolache and Fr. Andrew's paska, cinnamon bread & cinnamon/raisin bread. There were also apple dumplings, cakes, cookies and apricot/nut torte. Thanks to all who supported these fundraising events and those who helped make them a success.



Doug Duda, Sandy Hornak, Anna Marie Miller and Marge Kardell at the chicken dinner held on September 19 at the Cathedral.



Stuffed cabbage dinner prep work by Diane Pochron and her mom Rita Hilla. Over 1,100 stuffed cabbage were made in 3 hours!



Lots of items to select from at the flea market.

## Flea Market

Parishioners at St. John Cathedral debated on whether to hold their annual flea market this year due to the restrictions on indoor activities. On Friday & Saturday, August 7-8, the event was held with a limited number of people permitted inside as well as other guidelines. Parishioners as well as family and friends donated items small and large. A bake sale featuring cheregies and Cathedral Kolache was held during the two-day event. The flea market was extended by two weeks to include a bag sale to make extra profit in conjunction with one of the Cathedral take-out dinners. Unsold items were donated to Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Salvation Army, Construction Junction and the St. Vincent dePaul Society.



First day of ECF classes.

## Welcome ECF Students

Volunteers helped assemble "welcome back" bags for the children's ECF program using a Fraternal Grant initially requested for the Easter program that was canceled due to the pandemic. Classes started at the end of September.



Helping Hands volunteers.

## Helping Hands Day

Helping Hands Day at Ascension Church in Clairton was pulled together by Mike Sowko with help from Bill Kerr and John Glegyak. The volunteers attacked the hedges, shrubs and overgrown tree branches on the church and parish grounds on September 23. Karen Kerr graciously volunteered to provide a meal for them when they finished an exhausting day. Another day is being planned to work on removing tree stumps from the church grounds.

CONTINUED

## SEPRL CONTINUED

### Annual Clothing Drive

The lodge held its annual clothing drive three weekends in September at St. John Cathedral. Bonnie McTaggart again this year sent a box of hats, gloves, scarves and a baby blanket. As always, they were knitted and crocheted beautifully. The clothes collected, many still with original tags on them, were donated to Habitat for Humanity, Goodwill, Salvation Army and St. Vincent dePaul Society. Thanks to all who donated, helped sort, count, bag or box clothes as well as those who helped load the St. Vincent dePaul truck.

### Sisters Place Collection

Ascension Church members collected items for Sisters Place in September for Community Matching Funds. Sisters Place provides support for single mothers with education, parenting classes, assistance with housing, budgeting and other life skills.



Winter items and clothing drive items collected at the Cathedral.

### Upcoming Events

In October and November we will be collecting items for the Veterans Hospital and sponsoring a sock drive for homeless veterans. A collection will also be taken for the annual food drive for the Greater Pittsburgh Food Bank.

A stuffed cabbage sale is in the planning stages for Parish Matching Funds for a new heating unit for the Cathedral.

SS. Peter & Paul Parish in Duquesne, PA is initiating a Parish Expansion drive. Letters are being mailed to request donations for a "Bakeless Bake Sale." The parish is hoping to use the donations and GCU Parish Expansion Matching Funds for the church utilities this winter. Donations are being accepted through November 2020.

Lodge 602 third quarter meeting was held by officers to update transactions and finalize church and community events and year end plans. A plan for an annual meeting is being discussed but no decision has been made.

Trish Roberts | President  
Patty Bovee | Treasurer



Michael Pillar, Fr. Valerian Michlik and Mike Kiss, Comedy Night event coordinator.

## Pittsburgh South Regional Lodge (PSRL)

BETHEL PARK, PA

### Matching Funds Check Presentation

Following the Divine Liturgy on Sunday, August 9 at St. Gregory of Nazianzus Church in Upper St. Clair, PA, parishioner and PSRL Secretary-Treasurer Michael Pillar presented a check in the amount of \$5,000.00 to the parish family.

This generous donation is part of the 2020 Matching Funds Program, adding to the proceeds from the Comedy Night fundraiser.

As a community of faithful the parish expresses its sincere thanks to the GCU for their constant support of St. Gregory Church.

Michael Pillar | Secretary-Treasurer

## Lodge 625 Happenings

CONEMAUGH, PA

### Take Out Slavic Dinner

With the cancellation of the Slavic Festival slated for September 18<sup>th</sup> & 19<sup>th</sup> the lodge decided to hold a carry out sale of food items following Sunday Liturgy on September 20. The Slavic Dinner take out dinner included halupki, halushki, pirohi and a gob for \$10. This event was a huge success and is part of the lodge's Parish Matching Funds for 2020.



Patty Webb, Veronica Sokach, Vickie Svencer, & Mary Dubay ready to serve up some Slavic Dinners

### Halloween Cash Bash

The Easter Cash Bash is NOW a Halloween Cash Bash to be held October 24, 2020 from 6 to 9 PM at Holy Trinity Byzantine Catholic Church. Anyone who currently holds

a ticket or tickets can contact Georgia Lehman at 814-242-2083 for more information and details for the event. This event is also part of the Parish Matching Funds activities for 2020.

### Lodge Meetings

While continuing to observe the social distancing guidelines, Lodge 625 has been able to hold its quarterly meetings to conduct business and decide on various projects that support Holy Trinity Parish and non-profits in the Greater Johnstown area.

Members of Lodge 625 who would like to be added to the email list are asked to send an email to: [gculodge625@yahoo.com](mailto:gculodge625@yahoo.com), you can also like us on Facebook GCU Lodge 625.

Stay safe everyone!

Georgia Lehman |Secretary-Treasurer



Georgene Dubovecky and her brother Bill, preparing pirohi for the Slavic Dinner.



Mary Dubay (left) & Vickie Svencer preparing the potato/cheese filling.

### Open Air Christmas Market

After the Cash Bash event, the lodge will be gearing up for participation in the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual (open air) Christmas Market in downtown Johnstown on December 4 & 5, 2020. Members will be preparing Slavic dishes to sell during the two day event. This event helps to raise funds for local community organizations.

## UPCOMING LODGE 625 EVENT

### 4<sup>th</sup> Quarter/Annual Meeting & Election of Officers

**Sunday, November 8**  
**Following Divine Liturgy**  
**Approximately 10:15 AM**

Those wishing to run for office should contact Kathy Russin at 814-241-1631 no later than October 26, 2020 to be placed on the ballot. There will be no nominations taken the day of the meeting.

Holy Trinity Church Hall  
217 Fourth Street, Conemaugh, PA

## Lodge 644

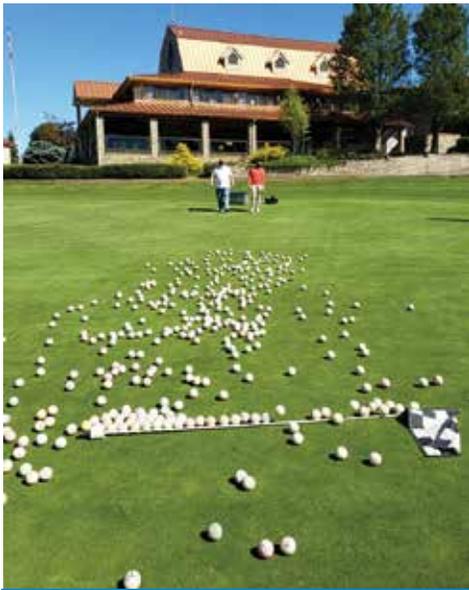
AKRON, BARBERTON & BRUNSWICK, OH

### Picnic and Cemetery Upkeep

This past summer Lodge 644 members were able to do some activities despite COVID-19 limitations. In Northeast Ohio the weather has been spectacular, blue skies, pleasant temperatures and cool breezes. Two outdoor activities, practicing social distancing and wearing masks were held. In early September, lodge members had a picnic on a meadow behind St. Michael cemetery in Mogadore OH. After the outdoor lunch, the members paid respect to relatives buried in the cemetery. St. Michael Byzantine Catholic Church was closed in 2012. The cemetery is maintained by Saint Nicholas Byzantine Catholic Church in Barberton, OH.



Marsha Ambrose, Sue Irving, Joan Clapsadle and Carol Climes at St. Michael Cemetery.



St. Emilian golf ball drop. Mary Tulenko and Paul Fogle co-chaired the event.



Fr. Jan Cizmar, Mary Tulenko, Natalie Washlock and Paul Fogle at the golf ball drop.

### Golf Ball Drop

On September 19, Lodge 644 members of St. Emilian BC Church participated in a golf ball drop, which was held in lieu of the annual Father John Keblesh Memorial Golf Outing. Father John was a parish son of Saint Michael Church. The golf ball drop was a GCU Matching Fund activity. The winner of the golf ball drop was Gail Gnall.

At the time of the submission of this article, lodge members and parishioners at St. Nicholas were busy collecting prizes and selling tickets for a virtual reverse raffle to will be held on October 18.

Rick Schen | Publicity Director

# UPCOMING LODGE 999 EVENTS

## Fall Harvest Fest

**Saturday, October 31**

**3 PM to 8 PM**

**\$5-Hayride, Trunk or Treat + Fire Pit**

St. Stephen Cathedral

8141 North 16th Street, Phoenix, AZ 85020

Benefits The Sisters of St. Basil, Uniontown, PA

## 50/50 Drawing Tickets

**Winner drawn on Monday, November 2, 2020**

**\$5 per ticket or 6 for \$25**

Benefits The Sisters of St. Basil, Uniontown, PA

Tickets can be purchased from any Lodge 999  
Officer

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-s- **Basil M. Wahal**, Managing Editor

# For Your Information

## Events

### Mount St. Macrina House of Prayer Schedule

#### Virtual Online Zoom Programs:

##### Wednesday Morning Self-Help Program

October 28-*Coping With Covid*

10 AM-12 NOON

By Christine Freeman, MDiv LSW Psychotherapist

\$10 Offering | Register by October 21

##### Tuesday Morning Reading Series

November 3, 10, 17 & 24-*"Fly While You Still Have Wings: and Other Lessons My Resilient Mother Taught Me"* by Sister Joyce Rupp

10 AM-11:30 AM

By Sr. Barbara Jean, OSBM

\$5 Offering per session or \$15 for all 4 sessions

Register by October 27

##### Saturday Morning of Reflection

November 7-*"Parables in the Gospel of Matthew"*

10 AM-11:30 AM

By Helenanne Hochendoner

\$10 Offering | Register by October 31

##### Sunday Christmas Preparation Afternoon of Reflection

December 13-*Conference, Question & Answer Session, Reflection*

1:30 PM-2:30 PM

By Deacon Stephen Russo

\$10 Offering | Register by December 6

##### Tuesday Evening Reading Series

February 18 & 25, March 4 & 11, 2021-*"Crossing the Desert: Learning to Let Go, See Clearly and Live Simply"*

6:30 PM-8 PM

By Sr. Barbara Jean, OSBM

\$5 Offering per session or \$15 for all 4 sessions

Register by February 11

**Call to Register: 724-438-7149 Please provide your email to receive your link to Zoom**

Mt. St. Macrina House of Prayer

10 West Main Street

PO Box 878

Uniontown, PA 15401-0878

Email: [hpmsm@verizon.net](mailto:hpmsm@verizon.net)

Website: [sistersofstbasil.org](http://sistersofstbasil.org)

### "Come and See" Weekend-Discover God's Plan

#### Virtual Online Retreat

Friday, November 6 to Saturday, November 7, 2020

Men ages 18-35

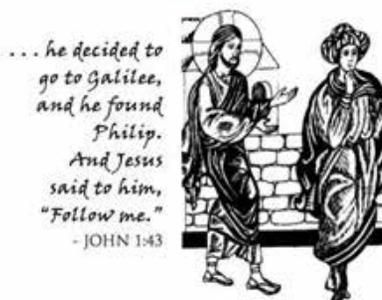
Every young man eventually has to make some hard decisions - college, career, marriage, family, religious life. How do I know what's right? Does God care what I decide? If you've ever thought about the priesthood, it's worth taking a weekend, even if virtually, to learn how to listen for God's plans for your future.

The Byzantine Catholic Seminary of Saints Cyril and Methodius is pleased to host this "Come and See" Weekend of Discovery. This year's retreat will be given virtually online. Invited to register are men, ages 18-35, single or married, who may be considering a vocation to the priesthood in the Byzantine Catholic Church. In the interests of facilitating the necessary disconnection from the world, this year's challenge of a virtual weekend

includes creating as much as possible an atmosphere that is prayerful, positive, and fraternal. A selection of pre-recorded talks introducing the Seminary formation program will be offered as well as a recorded witness talk with the seminarians. A panel discussion will be live-streamed along with at least one liturgical service.

There is no tuition for this Retreat. The application deadline is October 28, 2020.

To register, please visit the Seminary website at [www.bcs.edu](http://www.bcs.edu).



WEEKEND OF DISCOVERY

**GCU 2020 Golf Classic**  
**Monday, September 21, 2020**



Frank Dano III, Frank IV, Thomas Hoenninger and Matt Hoenninger.



Mike Kanai, Ronald Blough, Bill Uram and Frank Rajchel.

Golfer	City/State
Mark Cherpak	Munhall, PA
Frank Dano IV	Edmond, OK
Jeff Siesky	Elizabeth, PA
Mike Gallagher	Northeast, OH
Bryan Karaffa	Strongsville, OH
John Adamcik	West Mifflin, PA
Ron Campagna	Wadsworth, OH
Joseph M. Karaffa	Wadsworth, OH
George N. Juba	Beaver, PA
Mark Chekan	South Park, PA
Zack Wahal	Moon Twp., PA
Michael W. Karaffa	Strongsville, OH
Mike Zatezalo	Northeast, OH
Churck Rotella	Swissvale, PA
Charles Houser	Duquesne, PA
Ronald Cairns	West Mifflin, PA
Michael Mantsch	West Mifflin, PA
James Matlon	Whippany, NJ
Ben Rababy	Northeast, OH
John Maracek	Beaver, PA
Michael A. Suray	Pittsburgh, PA
Bill Uram Jr	Butler, PA
Mike Kanai	Allison Park, PA
Lorene Burns	West Mifflin, PA
Jean Karaffa	Strongsville, OH
Cecilia Double	Columbia Station, OH
Chris Eicher	Avondale, AZ
Ben Rababy	Northeast, OH
Frank Dano IV	Edmond, OK
Michael W. Karaffa	Strongsville, OH
Tim Germ	Murrysville, PA

Place
A-Flight 1st Place Gross
A-Flight 1st Place Net
A-Flight 2nd Place Net
B-Flight 1st Place Gross
B-Flight 1st Place Net
B-Flight 2nd Place Net
B-Flight 3rd Place Net (Tie)
B-Flight 3rd Place Net (Tie)
B-Flight 3rd Place Net (Tie)
C-Flight 1st Place Gross
C-Flight 1st Place Net
C-Flight 2nd Place Net (tie)
C-Flight 2nd Place Net (tie)
D-Flight 1st Place Gross
D-Flight 1st Place Net
D-Flight 2nd Place Net (Tie)
Sr-Flight 1st Place Gross
Sr-Flight 1st Place Net (Tie)
Sr-Flight 1st Place Net (Tie)
Sr-Flight 3rd Place Net
Women 1st Place Gross
Women 1st Place Net
Women 2nd Place Net
Closest to Pin #8
Longest Putt #9
Closest to Pin #11
Closest to Pin #14
Longest Putt #18



Scott Irons, George Juba and Greg Gibala.



Zack Wahal, Basil Wahal and Michael Suray.



Georgann Siesky, Lorene Burns and Karen Adamcik.



Joe Callahan, Gerry Corbo, Mike Karaffa and Mike Zatezalo.



Ronald Cairns, Michael Mantsch, Charles Houser and John F. Miller.



Tim Germ, Ted Trbovich and James Matlon.



Brian Blumling, Nathan Galiyas, Chris Eicher and Greg Duvall.



Scott Doepker, Joe Karaffa, Wayne Stair and Ron Campagna.



Chuck Rotella, Mark Chekan, Joe Chekan and Steve Thompson.



John Adamcik, Mark Cherpak, Jeff Siesky and Ed Cibulka.



John Maracek, Paul Lebanik, Rich Brooks and Brian Cherry.



Darcy Nelson, Ronda Kasian, Cecilia Double and Jean Karaffa.



Mike Gallagher, Ernie Goffi, Ben Rababy and Bryan Karaffa.

# Deceased Members

(Lodge-Member-City-State)

- 316 Patricia Ackerman, Bangor, PA  
999 Kathleen A. Adamo, Mesa, AZ  
CPRL Scott Albert, West Mifflin, PA  
8344 Murray Y. Alderfer, Macungie, PA  
8344 Mary Grace Anders, Alexandria, PA  
8344 John A. Arduino, Leechburg, PA  
8344 JoAnn Arlotti, Harrison City, PA  
182 Andrew Barilla, Swoyersville, PA  
66 Lillian Bartosh,  
North Tonawanda, NY  
8349 Dorothy Bates, Dallas, TX  
17 Evelyn Battle, Scranton, PA  
8344 Mary J. Bayto, Muse, PA  
8344 James L. Beach, New Enterprise, PA  
8344 Joan Bellavance, Elizabeth, PA  
8302 Edward D. Benedict, Phoenix, AZ  
8358 Janice H. Berg, Holmon, WI  
GHRL Emily Berta, Freeland, PA  
93 Charles Berzansky, Toms River, NJ  
8358 Winifred E. Birkley, Muskego, WI  
8344 Leonard C. Bisignaro,  
Warminster, PA  
8309 JoAnn Blaker, Ocala, FL  
8344 Rosalee J. Blatchford,  
Ellwood City, PA  
8344 Hazel Boliver, Gibsonia, PA  
GHRL James Joseph Bonczek, Plains, PA  
8344 Beverly Boyle, Warren, PA  
8354 Andrew Boytim, Chesapeake, VA  
999 Angela Brown, Tucson, AZ  
8344 Lillian Buchanan, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Elijah D. Bussotti, Brackenridge, PA  
302 Peter P. Butchko, Poland, OH  
8344 James Buxton, Williamsport, PA  
8344 Alexander Caparelli, Pittsburgh, PA  
994 Maxine Caprara, Leechburg, PA  
336 Christian Chermely,  
Concord Twp., OH  
182 Dorothy Chisarick, Swoyersville, PA  
8344 Hilda Cicone, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Catherine T. Clee,  
Southampton, PA  
CPRL Donald R. Conn, Pittsburgh, PA  
994 Pauline C. Copeland, Beaver, PA  
SEPRL Bridget Cosgrove, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Mary Crimbly, Point Marion, PA  
8344 Eunice Croll, Cresson, PA  
8344 Gary L. Cruse, Hollidaysburg, PA  
8344 Stella R. David, Johnstown, PA  
271 George Debalko, Mt. Prospect, IL  
945 Dorothy Derbin, Moscow, PA  
17 Edward Derenick, Taylor, PA  
15 Mario DiBella, Kenilworth, NJ  
17 Alice P. Dolinish, Old Forge, PA  
8344 Clayton Donnelley, Stroudsburg, PA  
8344 Nancy L. Dooley, Hatfield, PA  
860 Constance Dorosz, Shelby Twp., MI  
SEPRL Geo Durkota, Bethel Park, PA  
8344 Edna P. English, Frackville, PA  
8358 Laura A. Enright, Delavan, WI  
8344 Arthur Feldman, Jenkintown, PA  
8344 Patrick A. Fitzgerald, Erie, PA  
8344 Marlene Franklin, Clarendon, PA  
8344 Vincent A. Gargano, Pottsville, PA  
8341 Carolyn Gianangeli, Bellaire, OH  
8344 Wanda Gille, Freeport, PA  
53 Andrew Gomba, Swoyersville, PA  
109 David Gould, Tarentum, PA  
69 Joseph Hakun, Chester Springs, PA  
8344 Helen Hampson, McDonald, PA  
8344 John Harry, Pittston, PA  
8344 Mary Ellen Hazlett, Belle Vernon, PA  
336 Marian T. Herbst, South Euclid, OH  
625 Mary Herman, Johnstown, PA  
8344 Ronald Hickman, Ellsworth, PA  
8344 John S. Howe, Pittsburgh, PA  
8344 Patricia L. Huff, Chicora, PA  
994 Carol Hutchinson, Beaver Falls, PA  
8324 Ann M. Ingson, Severna Park, MD  
8358 Steven S. Johnson, Marshfield, WI  
8344 Carl A. Jurnovoy, East Norriton, PA  
8358 Caroline L. Kamrath, Hartland, WI  
15 Rosalie Karmazin, Levittown, PA  
8344 Frances Kessler, Altoona, PA  
8344 Anita B. Kettis, Warren, PA  
8358 Lloyd P. Knoepfel, Fort Atkinson, WI  
8344 Anna E. Kohan,  
Wilkes Barre Twp., PA  
8309 Robert Koman, Vero Beach, FL  
8358 Raymond J. Koss, Mosinee, WI  
8344 Helen Kosuda, Pittsburgh, PA  
8335 Mike Kraynak, Mahwah, NJ  
CPRL Kathleen F. Krek, McMurray, PA  
8357 Anthony J. Krukowski, Lisbon, OH  
8344 Alice Y. Kruszek, Carnegie, PA  
8358 Frederick J. Kummer, Middleton, WI  
8344 Clementina Lecce, Imperial, PA  
77 Mary A. Lemley, Lorain, OH  
8304 Donald Lent, Laguna Niguel, CA  
8357 Lena L. Lewellen, Morgantown, WV  
8344 Ralph W. Lincoln, Lake Lynn, PA  
8358 Robert Loeser, Brookfield, WI  
8344 Delma E. Lopez,  
East Stroudsburg, PA  
999 Clodean Love, Tucson, AZ  
SEPRL Eugene Lucas, Munhall, PA  
8344 Helen Makovics, Belle Vernon, PA  
442 Stephen M. Malutic, Campbell, OH

8344 Dominick A. Mammarella,  
Berwick, PA

235 Agnes Maronich, Bridgeport, CT  
SEPRL Lorraine Masick, Munhall, PA

8344 Elizabeth McCartney,  
Brackenridge, PA

10 Kurt A. McMillen, Aliquippa, PA

8344 Mary Meekins, Somerset, PA

340 George Mehalesko, Union, NJ

8344 Eleanor Merando, Monessen, PA

8344 Garry L. Messner, Birdsboro, PA  
SEPRL Donald A. Miller, Summerfield, FL

8344 Robert J. Miller, Minersville, PA

321 David M. Miney, Ligonier, PA

8344 Joseph Minjock, Monongahela, PA

8344 Danielle Mock, Duncansville, PA

8344 Raedel Moore, Orwigsburg, PA

8344 John Murray, Pittsburgh, PA

401 Dorothy Nedrich, Nanty Glo, PA

8344 Dorothy Norris, West Mifflin, PA

53 Nancy Partika, Kingston, PA  
CPRL Robert Perevuznik, Monroeville, PA

8327 Marvin P. Peterson, Ada, MN  
GHRL Nancy Platts, Wrightsville, PA  
SEPRL John Polivka, North Huntingdon, PA

258 Lenore Poorman, Bellefonte, PA  
CPRL George Popovich, Pittsburgh, PA

8344 Charles J. Potts, Cheswick, PA

8344 Ida Prevost, Pittsburgh, PA

994 Sheila D. Rabovsky, Ambridge, PA

8344 Robert J. Ray, Red Lion, PA

8344 Katherine Ricciardella, Butler, PA

8344 Frances I. Riley, Sewickley, PA

994 Louis Rittelmann, Boyertown, PA

8327 Robert D. Royston, Stewartville, MN

319 Fred S. Ruhala, Swartz Creek, MI

625 Elizabeth Russak, Johnstown, PA

999 Lupe A. Salazar, Tucson, AZ

8360 Grace Sapar, Simpsonville, SC  
SEPRL Geraldine Selznick, Duquesne, PA  
CPRL Joseph Seman, Pittsburgh, PA

8344 Calvin Shaffer, Hollidaysburg, PA

57 Elaine Shashura, Brownsville, PA

8344 Mary Sieber, Lower Burrell, PA  
CPRL Barbara A. Sites, Pittsburgh, PA

8304 Mary E. Skinner, San Diego, CA  
GHRL Helen Smerko, Arlington, VA

8344 Judith M. Smith, Pittsburgh, PA

8344 Ruth E. Steigerwalt, Lehigh, PA

8344 Josephine Straczek, Portage, PA

8309 Stephen J. Szabo, Ft. Worth, TX

8358 Leroy Tiede, Madison, WI

8324 Conan Timoney, Baltimore, MD

8344 Elizabeth E. Tribit, Millersville, PA

360 Esther M. Tsalonis, Cortland, OH

10 Paul Valiga, San Antonio, TX  
CPRL George Vida, Yorba Linda, CA

8358 David R. Wells, Greenfield, WI

8344 Richard D. Welsh, Bala Cynwyd, PA

8344 Catherine Wenzel, Allison Park, PA

8344 Dorothy Wozniak, Meadville, PA

8344 Norma Yartin, Monessen, PA

93 Doloris Yatzkanic, Kent, PA

8344 John Yingling, Lewisburg, PA

8344 Stephen Yuhas, Jim Thorpe, PA

10 Angela Yuhasz, Aliquippa, PA

8309 John S. Yusko, Port Orange, FL

8344 Armella M. Zang, Pittsburgh, PA  
CPRL John Zeedick, Kershaw, SC

53 Verna Zelesko, Wilkes Barre, PA

# Remembrances

## Eugene P. Lucas

Eugene P. Lucas, of Munhall, PA and a GCU member, died on July 20, 2020, age 81. He was the son of the late Michael and Laura (Rulka) Lucas and a lifelong member of St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral.

If one were limited in words to describe the life of Gene Lucas, it could be described as “simple” and “charitable.” A person with strong values, Gene Lucas took an uncomplicated life and translated it into one of constantly thinking of others. Of the many, many people who would meet him throughout his lifetime, most or all would attest that he was a man of integrity and great charity.

Born in Munhall, Gene lived his entire life there and received his Christian burial in that same community. After high school and serving in the United States Army, Gene moved onto employment that thousands of classmates, friends and neighbors also engaged, the steel mills. The communities of Munhall, Homestead and West Homestead in Western Pennsylvania are known as “Steel Valley,” and at that time steel was a natural transition for young graduates and veterans. It was the late 1950s and throughout the United States steel workers experienced very favorable increases in wages and benefits.

Gene Lucas never married, lived at his family home, went to work, went to church, and lived a simple lifestyle. He enjoyed college and professional sports, and his one luxury was an annual weekend trip to Florida to see a University of Pittsburgh football game.

All of this experienced a sudden jolt in the early 1980s with the closure of the steel mills. In his early 40s, Gene had worked long enough to have a pension income, and since he lived with his then widowed mother and

had no other familial responsibilities, he considered himself retired.

Along with his retirement came a major change in his lifestyle. St. John’s had just constructed its Cathedral Center, and parishioners were called upon to volunteer their services at the Center’s catering fundraising project. The Cathedral Rector at that time, Msgr. Judson Procyk, was the mastermind behind this fund raiser. People were attracted to him and cheerfully gave their time to completely staff the catering service which soon was hosting events of 500 or more.

Gene Lucas was among the one hundred or more early volunteers. At first he was involved in set up and clean up, both essentials to any successful event. Soon he moved onto beverage service, and his quiet nature and efficient workstyle made him a superb bartender. He became part of a volunteer team that prided itself in excellence.

Before long Gene would be called upon for more. He lived less than one mile from the Cathedral, had no job or family responsibilities, and could be summoned at any time. Msgr. Procyk saw fit to give a set of Cathedral Center keys to Gene Lucas and to call upon him for whatever need may arise. Gene for his part accepted the newfound responsibilities as an honor and an opportunity to further give of his talents for the good of his church and other people.

His simple lifestyle, rewarded by his annual weekend in Florida, weekly outings at a public golf course with a group of locals, and daily jaunts to Munhall’s Main Street to chat and critique the local political scenario, continued for most of the second half of his life. But not without strife. In the late 1990s he was diagnosed with serious illness, experienced months of

total disability, only to emerge anew, healthy and filled with a zest for life.

Even with his life threatened by the illness, Gene returned to life as he preferred it, simple and charitable. He resumed his volunteerism, and continued to support his church, the Byzantine Catholic Seminary in Pittsburgh, and other causes. When asked how he was doing, Gene, a person of few words, had only positive and encouraging comments. And so it would be until his final day.

He is survived by three nephews, Ronald, Jr. (Pamela), Daniel (Angela), and David (Judi) Lucas; a niece, Maureen (Arthur) Whittemore; and several cousins. In addition to his parents he was preceded in death by a brother Ronald (and wife Margaret) Lucas, and a niece Kathleen Lucas.

The Divine Liturgy of Christian Burial was celebrated at St. John the Baptist Byzantine Catholic Cathedral by Very Rev. Andrew Deskevich and Very Rev. Robert Pipta. Former Cathedral rector, Father Robert Karl was in attendance. Interment was in St. John the Baptist Cemetery, Munhall.

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